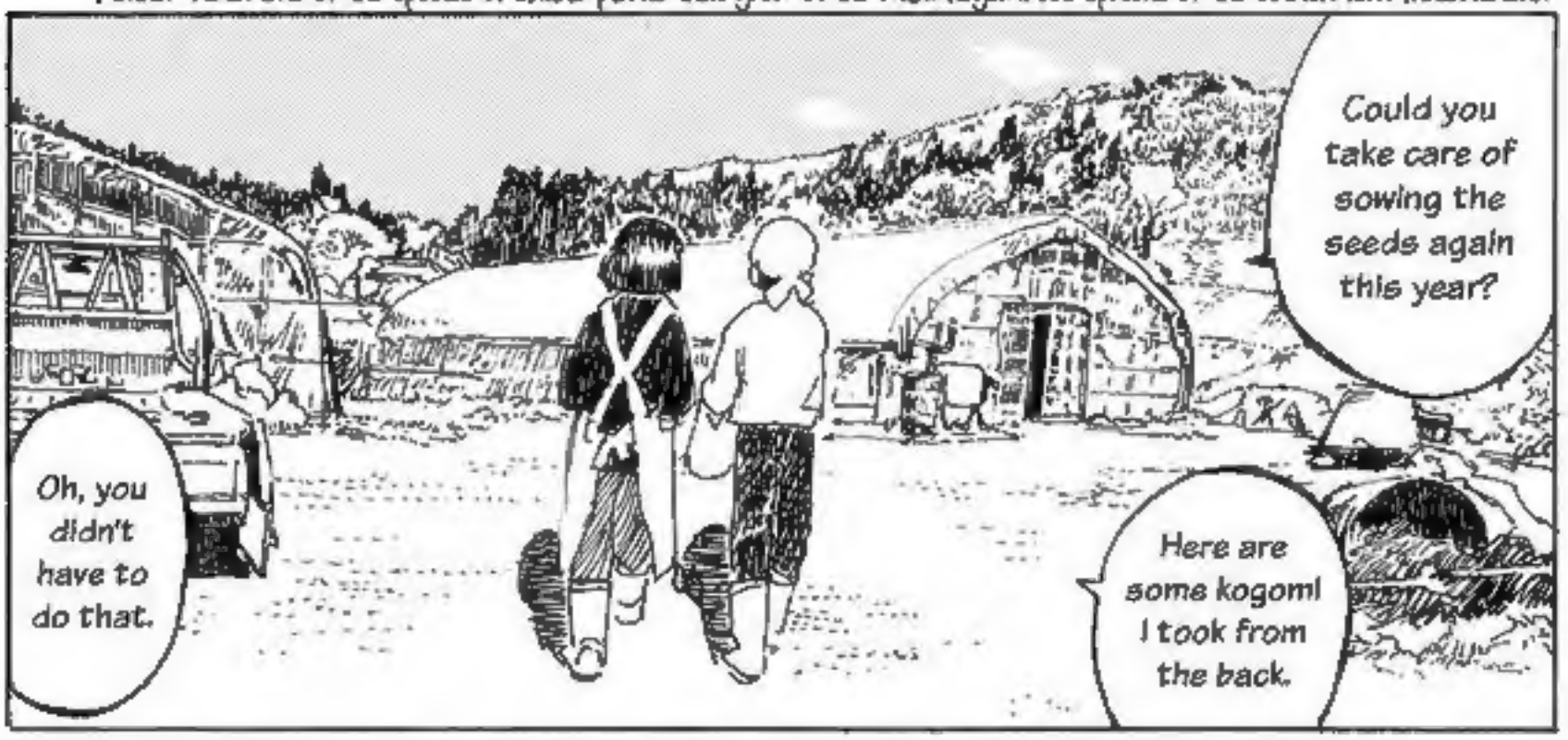
Little Forest

リトル・フォレスト

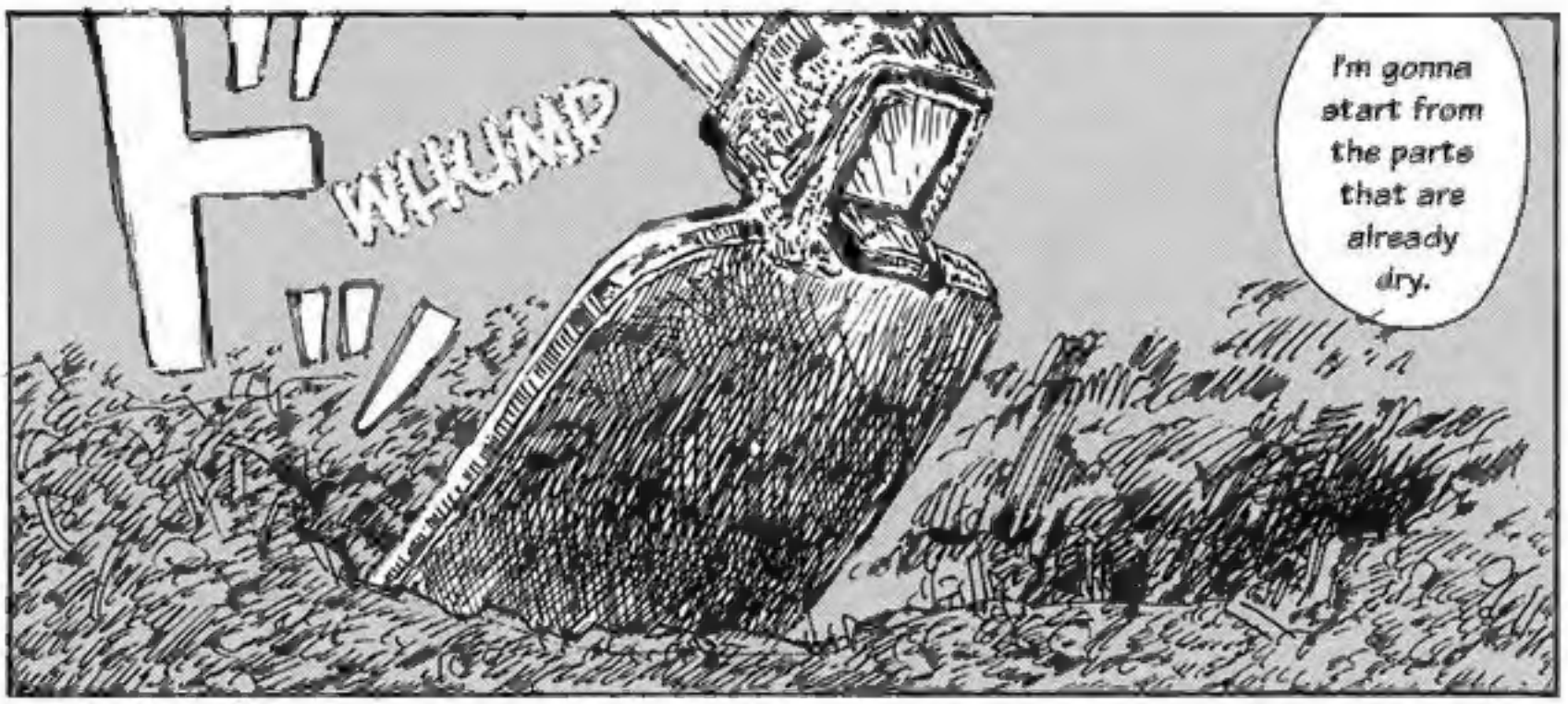
7th dish
Horsetail

meow
I've got to prepare the paddies, but there are so many roots around.
but I'm in a pretty big rush, you know.
Well, I might look like I'm goofing off.

Author Note: One of the species of edible plants that grow in the wild. Kogomi are sprouts of the ostrich fern (kusanetsu).


Could you take care of sowing the seeds again this year?
Oh, you didn't have to do that.
Here are some kogomi I took from the back.

Okay, let's review.
The salt content should be about one part salt, thirteen parts water, enough for a raw egg to float.
We place the unhulled rice grains in strong brine
and take out the grains that come floating up.
And after that, we rinse the salt off the rice.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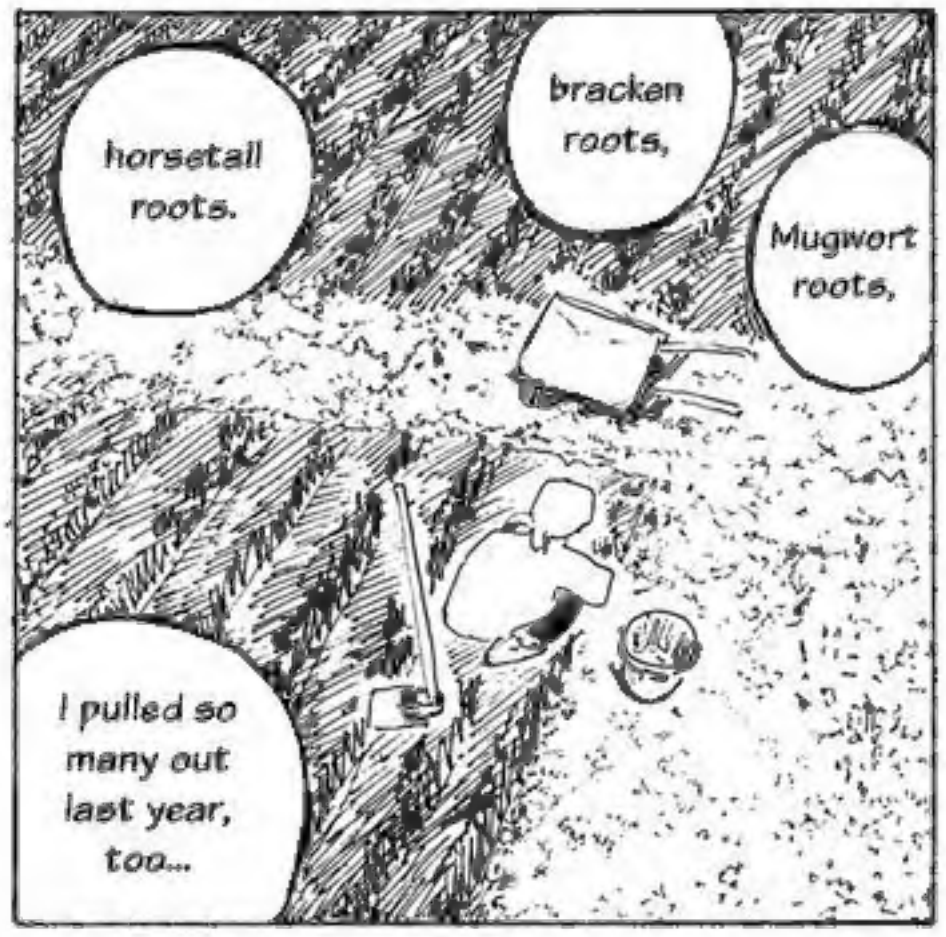
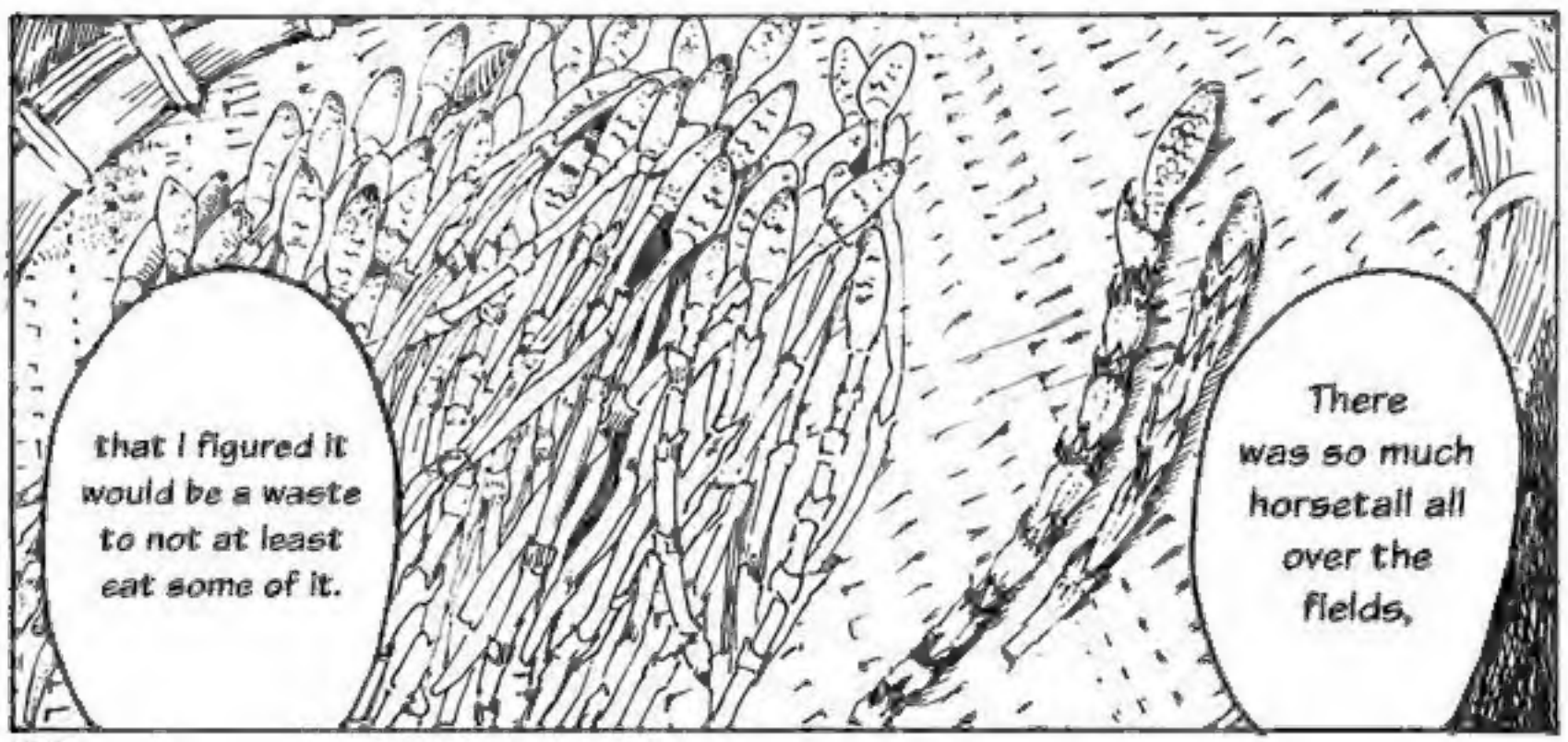
WHUMP
I'm gonna start from the parts that are already dry.

Till the soil,
pull out the roots.


horsetail roots.
bracken roots,
Mugwort roots,
I pulled so many out last year, too...


that I figured it would be a waste to not at least eat some of it.
There was so much horsetail all over the fields,

You have to take off all these tiny parts little by little.

PEEL PEEL

When you've got a huge pile of them,

taking off the husk one by one is such a chore.

Even worse, your finger tips end up all black.

But if you don't take them off they'd end up in your mouth when you eat them.

It takes all this time and your shoulders even start aching.

SHSH

PEEL

PEEL

SSSS

So then you boil 'em.

fwar fwar fwar

so this is all you get from that big heap of horsetails.

It shrinks in volume,

And make tsukudani by simmering them in soy sauce and mirin.

And, also,

You spend all that time and work,

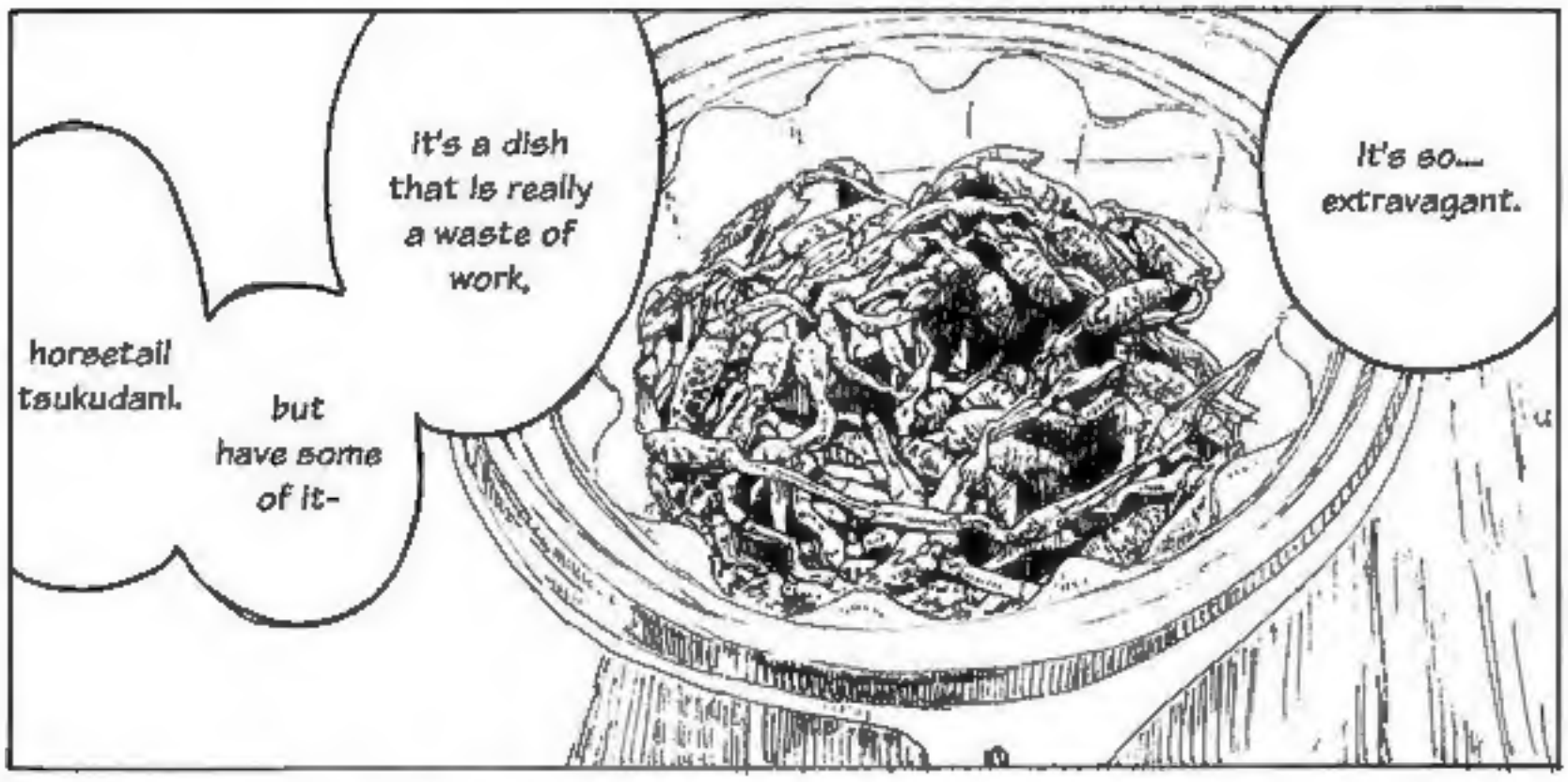
but this is all you end up with!

like, you're already this busy and you spend so much of your precious time and effort on it,

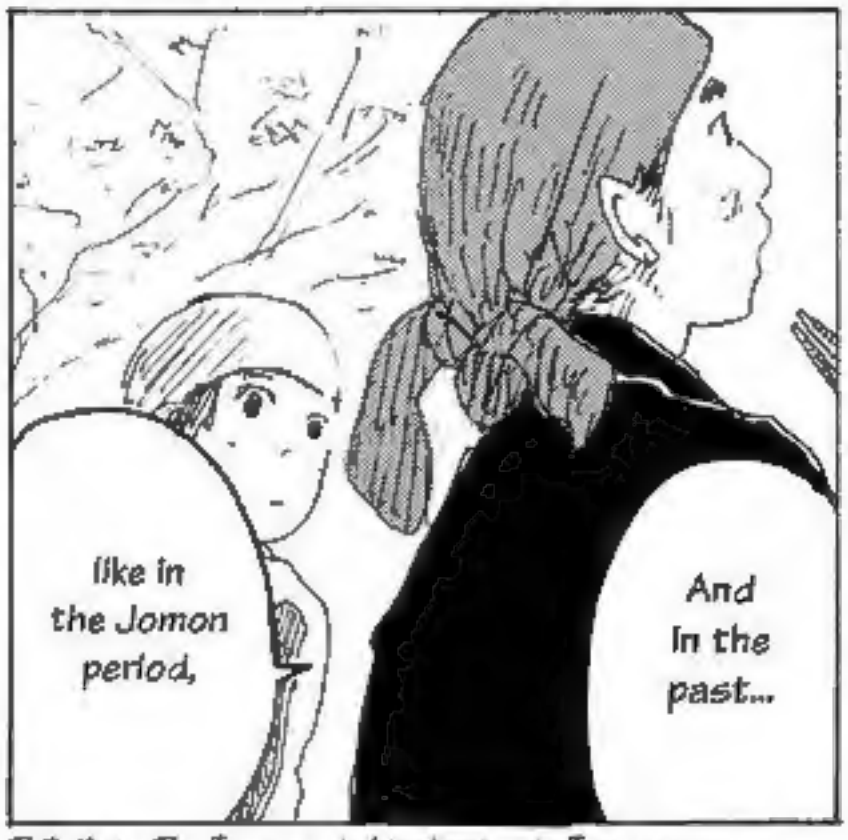
and this is what you've accomplished.

It really isn't like self-satisfying enough, or something...

even though you've put so much effort into it,



Well, you might say that, but...
The roots are so small that you just can't pull 'em all out.
When the fields are overgrown with them, no matter how many you pluck out, and how much you try, there's no getting rid of them.
Horsetails really are just weeds after all.



T/L Note: The Jomon period is the term in Japanese prehistory from about 14,000 BC to 300 BC.

Far from being a weed,
it may have been considered
a precious source of food.

there were very few
places in which the
horsetail could grow.

I feel like the people from ancient times must've considered the horsetail very important.

They are regarded as one of the great blessings of the mountains that mark the beginning of spring.

How should I put this...

They're the tiny spirits of the great earth,

gallantly aiming towards the heavens.

Or something like that!

...

And besides,

this is really yummy!

R-Really...?

You can really taste the flavor of the horsetail. I always knew you were good at cooking, Ichiko-chan!

He attended one of the branch school and is two years my junior. He recently returned to Komori.

This guy's name is Yuta.

I guess I must

...

have a weak spot for tall men that wax romantic.

Meow

7th dish Horsetails END

T/L Note: This type of egg drop dish is different from the egg drop soups that you drink in America, it's like... A thick congealed egg type dish.

You can also make horsetails into an egg drop dish right after it's been boiled. You add the boiled horsetails into a pot of dashi, sake, soy sauce, and mirin, that has already been heated up. You boil them all and bind it together with a scrambled egg.

Crickets and grasshoppers, ones with hair and ones without, green ones and black ones...

With the sudden surge in the population of stink bugs, something akin to the destruction of all leafy plants has occurred (even down to the leaves of the daikon radish!). However, the bugs don't seem to approach the spinach plant.